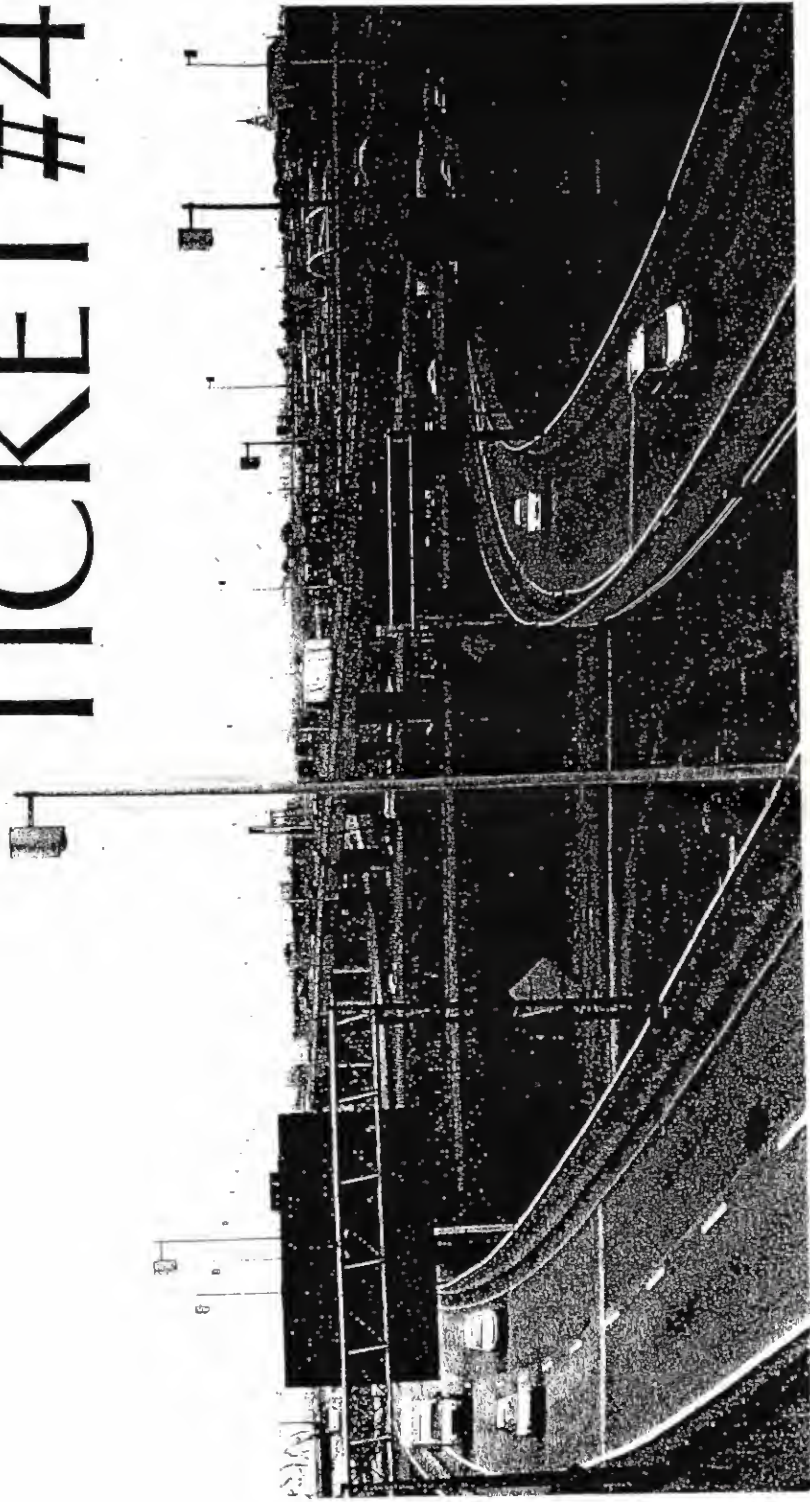


# ONE WAY TICKET #4



## SPARKS IN THE WINTER.

I'M CRAVING THIS MUSIC. THE SWEET SOUNDS OF INK ON PAPER, A DRUM BEAT SURGING FROM EACH PAGE. WORDS INTOXICATE ME. THEY GET UNDER MY SKIN AND IN MY VEINS. THEY HUM CONSTANTLY THROUGH MY HEAD; LITTLE SENTENCES MOLD INTO A REFRAIN, REPEATING AND REPEATING UNTIL I CAN FIND AN OUTLET. I'M SWEPT AWAY BY THESE WORDS, WRITING IN AN EFFORT TO REMEMBER THE FRANTIC THOUGHTS. MY PROSE IS NOT A SHAPING OF WHAT'S INSIDE, IT'S A LOSS OF CONTROL. BENEATH THE MECHANICS AND BIOLOGY, UNDER THE GEARS AND MACHINERY ARE FLAMES AND WIND AND URGENCY AND RUINS. IT'S A MIRACLE THESE NOTES I SCRAWL MAKE ANY SENSE AT ALL, AS THEY CRASH TOGETHER LIKE ROARING TIDES. UNPREDICTED TURBULENCE. ALLS I KNOW IS I NEED THIS, LIKE ANY ADDICT OR FANATIC. THIS EXPRESSION AND THIS EXPLOSION OF IDEAS ONTO TATTERED BITS OF PAPER. LIKE THE SCATTERED LOVE LETTERS I NEVER SEND OUT TO THE WORLD.

I'M NO POET BUT I CAN'T IMAGINE ANYTHING BUT POETRY TO DESCRIBE OUR MOVEMENTS. LARGE AND SMALL. I'M NOT A MUSICIAN BUT I CAN'T IMAGINE NOT SCREAMING ALONG AND ADDING MY VOICE TO THE CACOPHONY OF DISENCHANTED SOULS BURNING OUT ON THE EDGES OF OUR DYING CULTURE. I WRITE BUT I'M NO AUTHOR - I CAN'T CLAIM AUTHORITY OVER THESE HISTORIES OF THE PRESENT, THESE CELEBRATIONS OF MOMENTS WHEN THE WORLD MADE SENSE. WE'VE GOT A LOT OF STORIES TO TELL, AND SO I'LL ADD MY PEN TO THIS CONSTELLATION OF MYTHS AND NARRATIVES. WE HAVE A

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THANKS: MOM, TARA, JUDY, JOY, ALDEN, GABKA, FORT, KIT MALO, JUSTIN, KYLE, KATIA + LENORA, THE WEST AND WHITEBELT HOUSES, THE GREENSPOT, THE ONE EYED MAN WHO BOUGHT ME A BUS TICKET IN GA, AND MOXY FOR THE THOUGHTFUL TALKS IN BLOOMINGTON

I LIVE: ROLLING THUNDER (MAGAZINE), FIYA "BETTER DAYS" LP, RINGERS CD, ALDEN LIVE IN OUR LIVING ROOM, BITCHIN' DISCOUNT, BALLAST AND BORN DEAD ICONS, AMERICA! SCENERY, GHOSTPING, HAKEM BEY, BOB BLACK, RAQUEL VAN EIGEM AND LEARNING TYPOGRAPHY,

LOT TO TALK OUT, IN THE TWILIGHT WHERE THINGS SEEM SO  
IMPORTANT, AND WE'VE GOT A LOT OF LISTENING TO DO.  
SOMETIMES WE NEED A THUNDEROUS POOR, AND SOMETIMES  
SILENCE CAN SAY A LOT. THERE ARE PLACES AND SPACES FOR  
BOTH THESE THINGS, AND HERE'S TO OPENING THEM. AND  
HERE'S TO BEERKING THINGS, WHETHER CONSCIOUS OR NOT,  
WHETHER MATERIAL OR CONCEPTUAL. LIKE BORDERS AND  
LANDERS AND ROCK SCENES, LIKE CANDYS AND WINDOWS.  
AND TELEVISION SCREENS. LIKE THE WAY I MADE YOU  
FEEL LIKE SHIT, AND HOW WE HAVEN'T FOUGHT IN MANY  
REVOLUTIONS YET.

SO HERE WE GO - ANOTHER MIXED UP AND DISJOINTED  
COLLECTION OF MUSINGS ABOUT THE WORLD. I'VE NO GRAND  
NARRATIVE THIS TIME AROUND, NO OBJECTIVE UNDERLYING  
EVERYTHING. I'M WITHOUT THESE. I'LL JUST LIFT THESE  
LONGING FINGERS TO A TYPEWRITER THAT JAMS CONSTANTLY  
CUESING AND LAUGHING INTO THE NIGHT. I FEEL AT HOME  
IN THE ECHO OF THE CLACK-CLACK-CLACK, BUT REALLY  
I DON'T HAVE TIME TO GET HUNG UP ON IT THERE ARE  
THINGS THAT NEED TO BE SAID, STORIES THAT NEED TO BE  
TOLD. SOMETIMES I FEEL LIKE A MONKEY BABBLING ON  
IN A LANGUAGE NO ONE UNDERSTANDS, BUT I HANG ON  
TO A HOPE THAT THESE WORDS MIGHT JUST SPEAK TO YOU THE  
WAY THEY HUNG TO ME. IT'S A WAY TO MAKE MYSELF STAY

THINK UP NEW ARENAS OF OUT MANEUVERING CAPITAL-  
ISM, SAVING MY ENERGY FOR THE DIRECT CONFRONTATIONS  
TO COME. I'M REALLY CONFIDENT IN MYSELF THESE DAYS,  
HAPPY THAT I WAS ABLE TO FOLLOW MY HEART BACK TO  
THIS CITY. SOMETIMES I FEEL OUT OF THE LOOP OR NOT  
AS ACTIVE AS I WOULD LIKE TO BE, BUT THEN I  
REMEMBER HOW EACH NIGHT IS AN ADVENTURE. EVERY  
CONVERSATION AN EXPLOSION OF UNCHARTED TERRITORY,  
BECAUSE I'M CULTURING AN INCREDIBLE NEW RELATIONSHIP.  
I MUST DO WHAT I'M PASSIONATE ABOUT, OR EVERYTHING  
IS A LIE. AND RIGHT NOW I CAN'T EVEN BELIEVE HOW  
MUCH JOY I DECIDE FROM JUST SPENDING TIME WITH  
A NEW PERSON WHO'S CHANGED MY LIFE IN SO MANY  
WAYS.

SERIOUSLY, YOU MAKE ME FEEL ALIVE AND LIKE EVERY  
MOMENT MATTERS. THANK YOU.

HERE'S TO THE POSSIBILITY OF PERSONAL PRINT FAN-  
ZINES STILL BEING RELEVANT, AND HARDCORE PUNK  
COUNTER CULTURE STILL BEING A BREEDING GROUND  
FOR RADICALS OF ALL KIND. FUCK YEAH, THIS MEANS  
THE WORLD TO ME, AND LET ME KNOW IF YOU  
FEEL THE SAME WAY.

MORE STARS, LESS SATELLITES! *W, J.*

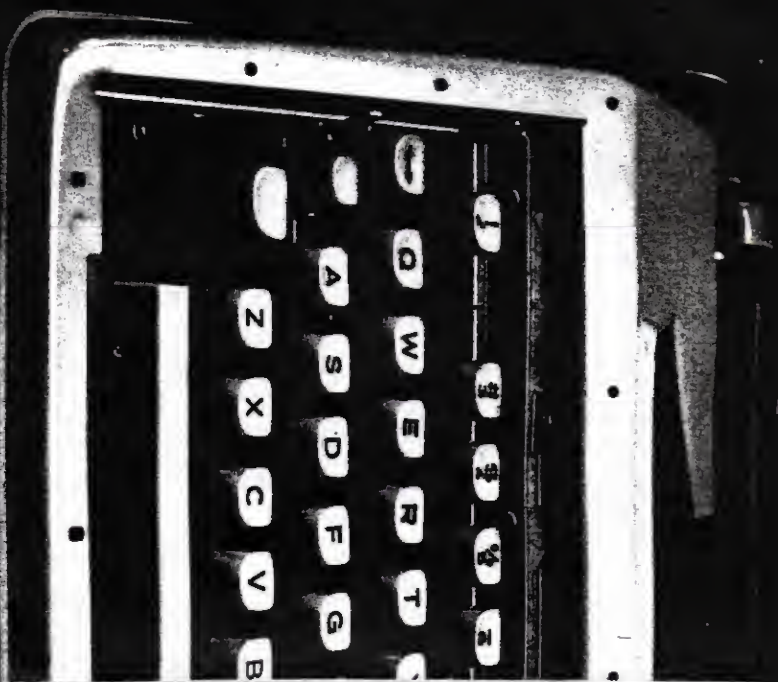


SAME. I'D LIVE TO THINK I'M NOT JUST REPEATING OR IMITATING, BUT TAKING WHAT'S BEEN SAID AND PICKING UP WHERE WE'VE LEFT OFF.

AND AS ANOTHER WINTER COMES TO A CLOSE, MAYBE WE'RE CONTENT JUST TO SAY WE MADE IT THROUGH, BUT THIS IS A JOURNAL TO THE STARKS, THE BURNING MOMENTS WHEN WE THOUGHT THE WHOLE DAMN MAD CLOWN SHOW MIGHT JUST BUST INTO FUCKING FLAMES.

IT WAS MY INTENTION TO HAVE THIS DONE SIX MONTHS AGO, BACK WHEN I WROTE THE INTRO, WHEN I HAD THAT BURNING DESIRE TO WRITE. I WROTE A BUNCH DURING THAT TIME, AS WINTER TURNED TO SPRING, AND IT SAT AROUND AND I NEVER GOT AROUND TO PUTTING IT OUT. FIRST IT WAS THE STUDENT STRIKE, THEN WORKING FULL TIME, THEN TRAVELING AROUND THE US. BY WAY OF TRAINS AND THUMBS AGAIN. HERE WE ARE THOUGH, AND I'VE SCRAPPED A TON, WROTE NEW STORIES, AND AS ALWAYS THIS LOOKS WAY DIFFERENT THAN WHAT I ORIGINALLY CONCEIVED. ALL THIS SEEMS STRANGELY DATED, GIVEN THE MAGNITUDE OF MY SUMMER AND FALL. I'VE SINCE FALLEN IN LOVE AND DROPPED OUT OF SCHOOL, RETREATED WESTWARD ACROSS THE COUNTRY AND MOVED INTO A LEAKY HOUSE FULL OF PUNKS. I SPEND MY DAYS SHOPPING AND GOING TO THE LIBRARY, READING AND WRITING AND GOOFING AROUND WITH MY ROOM MATES. VANCOUVER POURS DOWN RAIN AND WE SIT AND SIP TEA, AND I'M FUCKING STOKED ON MY FRIENDS HERE. IT TURNS OUT THE GRANT PROGRAM WE FOUGHT SO HARD FOR LAST SPRING HAS ACCEPTED ME, AND THEY'RE GOING TO GIVE ME COPIOUS AMOUNTS OF FREE MONEY TO RETURN TO SCHOOL. SO, IT LOOKS LIKE THAT'S WHERE I'M HEADED COME JANUARY. FOR NOW I'M ATTACKING LIFE AS BEST I CAN, GETTING METHODOLOGICAL ABOUT FREE FOOD SCAMS AND TRYING TO

"THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS AUTOBIOGRAPHY. THERE'S



"WHAT ABOUT THIS FEELING OF NEVER REALLY BEING  
INSIDE YOUR OWN SKIN?"

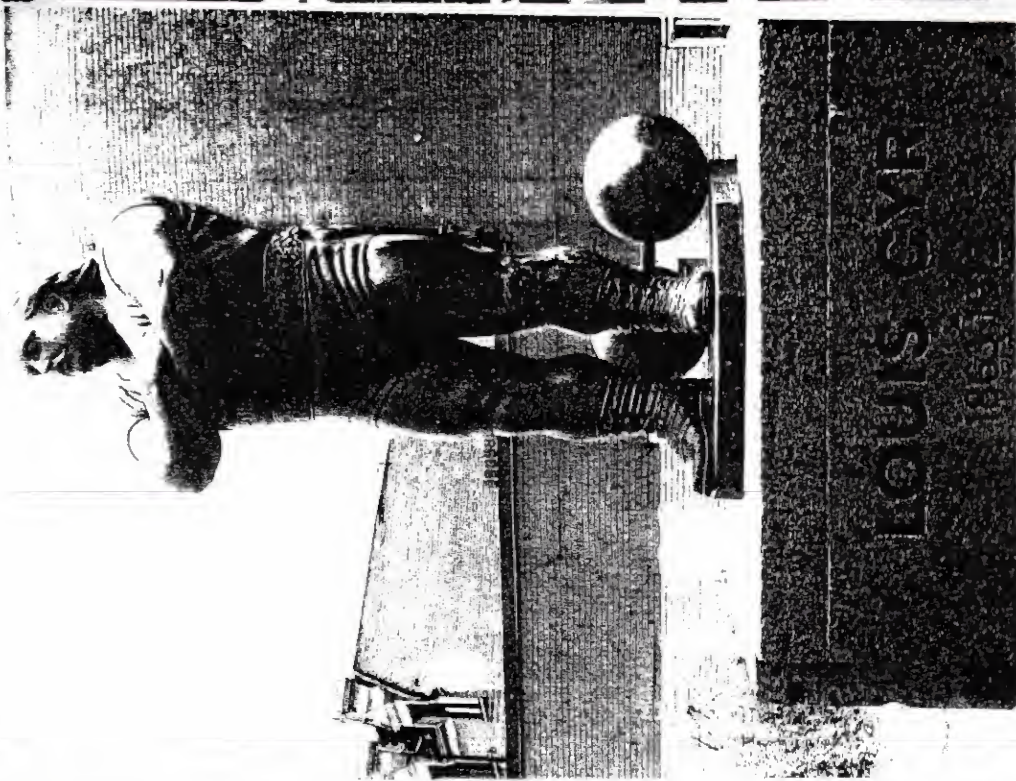
"THE GLOWING PASSION FOR STEAKING BOOBS, CLOTHES,  
FOOD, WEAPONS OR JEWELRY SIMPLY FOR THE  
PLEASURE OF GIVING THEM AWAY, GIVES US A GLIMSE  
OF WHAT THE WILL TO LIVE HAS IN STORE FOR  
CONSUMER SOCIETY."

"TACTICS NEED SCOUTS DRIVEN BY INDIVIDUAL  
DESPAIR."

--RHOUL VANLEIGEM,  
THE REVOLUTION OF  
EVERYDAY LIFE.

ONLY ART AND LIES."

- JEANETTE WINTERSON





## ANOTHER DAY AT THE LAB.

"I realize this is sort of a weird situation to watch an erotic film," she said, wearing a white lab coat and a strictly professional demeanor. I sat, with my pants off and a thermal camera pointed at my crotch, on a cold medical table, smiling to myself about how bizarre the situation was. "We don't, at anytime, want to make you so nervous that it becomes uncomfortable." I nodded, not wanting to heighten the tension in the room. How could this not be uncomfortable? Does she think this is something I do regularly? Is there any doubt in her mind that I am here for any other reason than the advertised compensation of seventy five dollars for two hours of my time? What's the sense in pretending that I actually care about the results of her scientific research? She must realize that I'm faking it just enough to make sure I still get paid.

So I saw this add on the McGill website advertising a study testing arousal in men after watching a pornographic film. And here I am, naked from the waste down, watching said movie on Virtual Reality DVD goggles while two scientists poke my penis with filaments and rate the sensitivity. I am almost sorry for their research, because during the ten minute film I barely felt any physical arousal, which I imagine is what they need for their test. Something about the cold and clinical setting, coupled with a pretty boring display of actors fucking each other without much emotion, left me flaccid and nervous. I've said before that I don't find porn that interesting, even if it's anti-sexist or diy. I was sort of into it for about 30 seconds, and then it just got repetitive and

IT USED TO BE "HOME." NOW IT'S JUST "HERE."

A LITTLE I STOLE FROM SOMEONE CLEVER. AND I WANDER ON, ME AGAINST THE AFTER MIDNIGHT AMBER OF STREETLIGHTS AND GOD DAMNED MEMORIES.

"THE UNIVERSE MAKES HERE, IN THIS NARROW STRAIGHT, INFINITY AND COMPRESSION LAUGHT IN THE NOW. SPACE AND TIME CANNOT BE SEPARATED. HISTORY AND FUTURE ARE NOW. WHAT YOU REMEMBER, WHAT YOU FORGET. THE UNIVERSE CURVING IN YOUR GUT... WHATEVER IT TAKES THAT PULLS THE END, THAT TURNS YOU FIRST THE BOUNDARIES OF YOUR OWN LIFE INTO A BRIEF AND TOTAL BEAUTY, EVEN FOR A MOMENT, IT IS ENOUGH."

- JENNIFER WINTERSON

REFRESHING NOW THAT WALKING HAS WARMED ME UP A BIT. EVERY CORNER OF THIS TOWN IS A STORY. LIKE THE TWO HOUSES FACING EACH OTHER I'M PASSING JUST NOW. ONE, AN OLD FRIEND WHO STUCK WITH ME THROUGH TURBULENT TIMES. ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STREET, COURTENAY'S SECOND "PUNK" HOUSE. I REMEMBER THE CONFESSORIAL LOVE LETTER I DELIVERED ONE ANKWARD SUMMER NIGHT, LONG AGO, AND ANOTHER TIME TALKING WITH JACKSON UNTIL THE SUNRISE IN THE ATTIC. I CARRY ON DOWNTOWN, AND THEN TAKE IT TO THE ALLEY. COURTENAY HAS SO FEW PEOPLE WHO WRITE GRAFFITI I'M SURE I KNOW WHO ALL THE CIRCLE A'S AND ANTI-COP SLOGANEERING BELONGS TO. I WALK A FEW MORE BLOCKS AND ADMIRE THE RECENTLY LIBERATED "FREE WALL" AND SMILE AS I SEE SOME PAB STENCILS MY FRIENDS HAVE MADE. IT'S FUNNY THAT WE NEVER DID THAT SORT OF THING WHEN I ACTUALLY LIVED HERE. I CLIMB UP ONTO MY FAVORITE ROOFTOP AND LOOK OVER DOWNTOWN TURNING OVER DIFFERENT STORIES IN MY HEAD. I SHIVER A LITTLE AFTER SITTING FOR A WHILE, GAZING OUT AT ALL THE LIGHTS ACROSS THE RIVER. THE SUBURBAN HILLS TWINKLE IN THIS NOSTALGIC TWILIGHT. I JUMP DOWN FROM ATOF THE COMIC STORE AND DO WHAT I CAME HERE TO DO. SAY MY GOODBYE. MAKE THINGS FINAL WITH PAINT ON A MOTHER-FUCKING WALL.

silly. Something about images of genitals fitting into each other, close up and explicit, again and again, just doesn't do it for me. It promises excitement, sexual gratification, but doesn't deliver. I get bored. It focuses on the mechanics of sex, the nuts and bolts. In doing so I can't help but feel it makes sex mechanical. And this takes away a certain magic, reduces the irreducible. How can you capture the intensity and joy of sex with such simple imagery? There's no room for silence or subtlety, for the heart pounding pressure just before the first kiss. Porn has never shown me the intricacy of getting to know who someone is not just through language, but by bodies melting together and boundaries of *you* and *me* getting a little blurred.

"Okay, just knock on the door when you're dressed," she says as they leave the room. I'm made to fill out a few more surveys about my sexual arousal and given a few parting words, and an assurance that the check is in the mail.

I exit the Stewart biology building and unlock my bike, speed down the hill to Sherbrooke. Weaving through traffic I think back on similar ways I've gotten money in the last year. The first study I did at McGill involved a set of personalized braces being made for my teeth, which were then hooked up to a robot arm that measured the minute motions of my jaw. The college bro-dude lab assistant wiped up my drool and went off about how much McGill "rules." I stole a toothbrush and got sixty bucks.



They told me to come back if I wanted to keep the scary plastic replica of my teeth, and I was totally stoked, but could never find the lab again. As far as I know they probably use it at science kid frat parties to make jokes. I imagine anything a plastic pair of replica teeth says is pretty god damned funny.

Then there was the hearing study I participated in last fall. It was a little more involved, requiring multiple trips to the lab for tests where I would distinguish various computer tones and sounds from others, pressing one or another button if they were the same or different. I inevitably zoned out and made mistakes that were a little too obvious, corrupting the scientific process and bringing down the subtle but firm wrath of Katrina, the head of the study. But in the end I did the brain scans they needed and probably fit into their charts and graphs well enough, and they sent me a rad image of what my brain looks like. It seems unbelievable that I sat and listened to weird noises alone in a sound sensitive laboratory as a form of employment. But hey, it paid my rent and left me with no strings attached. I squeezed through a little longer without subjecting myself to the suicide party known as WORK, the least sensible thing any of us could possibly do with our time. But they've bamboozled us all and work comes to be thought of as what a rational, responsible citizen should center her life around. Fuck that shit.

The incessant construction makes it hard to fit through the backed up traffic, not to mention my bike's grinding and rickety bottom bracket. I speed down to Maisonneuve and pass my own university, as the rain picks up and my gloveless hands begin to

## SAYING GOODBYE.

IT'S TWO A.M. AND I'M WONDERING SOME FAMILIAR STREETS AGAIN. LATER, I'LL DESCRIBE THIS AS MY "POWER CONSTEEL" SUMMER — EMOTIONAL STATES FLUCTUATING TO THE EXTREME. AND TONIGHT IT'S A SOLITARY WALK THROUGH MY HOMETOWN, MY OLD STOMPING GROUND. THE PLACE I LOVE TO HATE AND HATE TO LOVE, AND FOUND SO HARD TO LET GO. BUT I DID. IT'S THE FIRST CHILLY NIGHT OF AUGUST, AND I'M WONDERING WHY I DIDN'T BEING A JACKET. I WALK BY THE PARK WHERE WE SWAM ALL SUMMER, AND THINK ABOUT LEAVING TOMORROW. THINKING BACK OVER CONSECUTIVE YEARS OF LAZING ABOUT BY THE RIVER, JUMPING OFF ROCKS AND WALKING IN MY DAD'S THICKLY FOREST TRAILS. THE SPRAY PAINT CANIS IN MY BACKPACK BUMP TOGETHER, CLINKING METALLICALLY AS I PUT UP THE PACE IN AN EFFORT TO STAY WARM. I LEAVE A CLASSIC "CYCIC" TANK AS I ROUND THE CORNER AND CLIMB UP THE LITTLE HILL, REMEMBERING ALL THE TIMES WE BOMBED DOWN ON MY BIKE. AND THE DAYS WE JOYFULLY RODE DOWN ON TO BOGANS WHEN THEY CANCELLED SCHOOL BECAUSE OF HUGE SNOWFALLS. IT SEEMS SO DISTANT NOW. A FOREMAN AND FUZZY MEMORY. CROSSING THE TRAIN TRACKS I REMEMBER WHEN I LAD MY FIRST STENCIL ON THE BEACH RIVER HERE, AND HOW IT STAYED UP FOR MONTHS. I WALK DOWN MAIN STREET, THE COLD AIR FEELING NICE IN MY LUNGS,

THE CITY SREAMS TO ME AS I'M RINDING HOME, I THINK. THE  
CONCRETE SCREENS. THE LONELY STORIES OF THOUSANDS OF  
WAYWARD SOULS CRY OUT, PAIN EXPLODES FROM THE PAVE-  
MENT. WHAT HAVE WE DONE? HOW DID WE GET HERE? AND  
WHERE DO I FIT IN THIS PLACE? I'M CONSTANTLY RE THINKING  
MY OPINION ON MONTREAL. THE CITY IS TOUGH AS NAILS  
AND COLD AS HELL. IT'S GOT SECRETS AND SOMETHING  
NEW AROUND EVERY CORNER. BUT MOSTLY, I THINK ABOUT  
HOW I'M TIRED AND WEAK FROM THIS BLOODY JOB, AND  
ONE DAY CLOSER TO QUITTING FOREVER.

WE MAKE AMERICA MECHANICAL, REPLACING  
BEATING HEARTS AND BLOOD FILLED VEINS WITH  
ELECTRONS AND STATIC.

freeze. April is taunting us with sunny warm days we haven't felt  
in eons, and raining whenever I have to go anywhere. But even  
if my brakes don't work and my fingers are starting to get numb,  
I'm glad to be biking again. These jaunts through town let me  
reflect a little. Think about big questions like whether to work,  
to continue going to school, to get involved in activist projects,  
to write more or to just spend time letting all my friends know  
how awesome they are. I make it home, fumble my way inside  
and stare out the window, shivering and soaked. I subject myself  
to strange experiences like the experiment today in order to 'suck  
the marrow out of life,' I guess, to feel rare moments of embodied  
experience and genuine adventure. I'll offer up my body to sci-  
ence so as to work on the things that are important to me. Like  
making a home here in this cold, drafty apartment that every  
day surges with more energy. Like working with others on social  
and political projects that have broad and far reaching aims. Like  
trying again and again to find an outlet for this fucking fury in  
my belly. My life definitely swings up and down, with rainy days  
watching weird porno movies in research labs, but there are also  
quite a few sunny ones where I think things will be just fine.

## KEEP ZINES DANGEROUS.

THIS IS A CALLOUT. THIS IS A CRITICISM. THIS IS A PANT THAT SEEKS TO BE CHALLENGING BUT CONSTRUCTIVE, STIRRING AND OFFENSIVE AND YET A MEANS TO GET FROM HERE TO WHERE WE NEED TO GO.

WHY ZINES? WHY WRITE? WHY CUT AND PASTE MY LIFE INTO PAINSTAKINGLY PACE UPON PACE? BECAUSE THERE IS A DANGER IN LAYING ONESELF BARE, IN COMMUNICATING THE MINUTE DETAILS OF A LIFE. WHEN SOMEONE READS THESE WORDS THERE SHOULD BE A CONNECTION. THERE SHOULD BE A LINK FORMED BETWEEN WRITER AND READER. AN IMPRESSION THAT THIS IS NOT A GREAT WORK OF ART, BUT RATHER A SUBVERSIVE ATTACK ON A WORLD WHERE ALL WE'RE SUPPOSED TO DO IS CONSUME GREAT WORKS OF ART. ZINES CAN BE EARTH SHAKING BECAUSE OF THE FORM THEY TAKE.

BECAUSE THEY LOOK HANDMADE. BECAUSE THEY EMBODY MEDIUM AS MESSAGE. BECAUSE THEY INTRINSICALLY SHOUT OUT, "YES! YOU CAN DO THIS TOO!" THIS DOESN'T MEAN TO SAY WE SHOULD

ACCEPT SHITTY ZINES ON THE BASIS THAT THEY FIT INTO A CERTAIN AESTHETIC. WE MUST ALWAYS BE CRITICAL, OF OUR FORM BECOMES MEANINGLESS. THE ZINE, LIKE PUNK OR DIY OR HARDCORE, IS BECOMING AN INCREASINGLY COMMODIFIED OBJECT. IT IS BECOMING ASSIMILATED BY SPECTACULAR CAPITALISM, AS CULTURAL ENGINEERS LATCH ON TO WHAT THEY THINK MIGHT BE THE NEXT BIG THING. BUT THIS

AND THAT'S WHY I LOVE THIS RIDE SO MUCH. I HEAR RAPT'S VOICE THROUGH THE STATIC FILLED RADIO, "OKAY, THAT'S ALL FOR TODAY." AND SIGH, TOTALLY RELIEVED. I TAKE A DEEP BREATH AND SMILE. THE JUNE HEAT HAS ATTACKED MY ALL DAY. THE CITY IS SO HUMID IT FEELS LIKE THE AIR ITSELF IS SWEATING. I'M DEAD TIRED AND SORED WITH SWEAT, AND I SLOWLY PEDAL WESTWARD BACK TO MY APARTMENT.

I TAKE MY TIME. I GRIN LIKE AN IDIOT. I SING SONGS TO MYSELF AT THE TOP OF MY LUNGS. I RIDE WITH NO HANDS AND AID BEGIN TO MY FAVORITE RECORD. PUSHING AROUND ALL DAY HAS MADE ME SO CONTENT TO RIDE HOME SLOWLY, AT MY OWN PACE. I THINK ABOUT THIS FUCKING CITY, WITH ITS BILLBOARDS AND CARS AND HIGHRISES. THE MONOTONY AND THE MINDLESS. IT SEEMS TO ME THERE IS A MENTALITY OF GRINDING GEARS THAT CONSUMES ALL OF US CAUGHT UP IN THE WORK WEEK. AND THROUGH THIS SLOW RIDE HOME I'M ABLE TO REFLECT HOW WHAT THIS RACE REALLY IS.

AS I PASS PELL STREET, ALMOST HOME, THERE'S THIS TRAFFIC LIGHT WHO WORKS FOR AN UNBECOMING PARKING LOT. HE'S SILENT AND LIES BLINDLY HIS WHISTLE AND WHIRLING AROUND HIS PATRONS. WE NOD TO EACH OTHER, AS I SEE HIM EVERY DAY, AND THINK ABOUT HOW I'M SLIPPING INTO A ROUTINE. THOUGH, I'M PARADOXICALLY OVERJOYED AT THIS SIMPLE CONNECTION WITH A TOTAL STRANGLER.



## THE LONG RIDE HOME.

THIS IS WHAT I LIKE ABOUT BEING A BICYCLE COURIER IN MONTREAL, THE RIDE HOME. SEEMS STRANGE THAT I CONTINUE A JOB WHERE THE THING I LIKE BEST HAPPENS AFTER I'M ACTUALLY FINISHED WORKING. BUT I GUESS IT'S ALWAYS BEEN LIKE THAT WITH JOBS I SEEM TO FIND MYSELF IN. I HAVE ALWAYS LIKED BEING ABLE TO SLACK OFF, FAKING A SICK DAY AND SKIPPING OUT EARLY, BUT I'VE NEVER REALLY LIKED THE WHOLE WORKING THING. BUT THIS RIDE HOME - IT'S SO CALMING, AND REFLECTIVE. I USUALLY FINISH UP AROUND THE OLD PORT AND TAKE ST. JACQUES AND ST. ANTOINE WEST BACK TO ST. HENRI. TOO MANY GOD DAMNED SAINTS IN THIS CITY, IT CONFUSES THE HELL OUT OF ME, RIDING DOWN THESE BUSY THROUGHWAYS, I'M SO AT PEACE. MY MENTAL STATES CONTRAST MY SURROUNDINGS, ALL DAY I'VE BEEN RUSHING AROUND FROM OFFICE TOWER TO OFFICE TOWER, SPEEDING THROUGH INTERSECTIONS AND BRINGING THE WRONG WAY DOWN ONE WAY STREETS. MY COMPANY IS REALLY BUSY AND EVERYTHING IS ALWAYS IN HYPER-SPEED. THE DISPATCHER NEVER SAYS MORE THAN A FEW HURRIED WORDS TO ME AND THEN, OF COURSE, THERE IS THE PRESSURE OF MAKING MORE MONEY FOR EACH EXTRA CALL I CAN DO. THIS ALL ADDS TOGETHER AND EACH DAY FEELS FRANTIC, A FRENZY OF RUSHING AROUND AND STRESSING OUT. LOTS OF THE COURIERS I TALK TO SEEM TO LOVE THIS. I, ON THE OTHER HAND, COUNT DOWN THE HOURS UNTIL THE END OF THE DAY.

THEFT RETAINS ONLY A SHELL, ONLY AN ILLUSION. IT OFFERS UP A COOL NEW OBJECT DEVOID OF THE ENERGY AND PASSION AND CRAFT THAT MADE THIS COMMUNITY AND MOVEMENT WORTH A DAWN IN THE FIRST PLACE. WHICH IS THE IMPETUS FOR MY CALL - KEEP ZINES DANGEROUS! IT IS BETTER TO DO WHAT MAKES YOU FEEL ALIVE AND FREE AND WRITE A ZINE ABOUT THIS, THAN TO SPEND ALL ONE'S TIME WRITING ZINES. SCRAWL NOTES IN BETWEEN THE WILD MOMENTS OF ABANDON, IN THE CALM BEFORE THE HURRICANES THAT SWEEP UP LIVES LIVED WITH NOTHING TO LOSE. NO MORE ZINES ABOUT ZINES. NO MORE ZINES ABOUT LIVES FILLED WITH NOTHING BUT MAKING ZINES. ZINES SHOULD NOT BE MADE WITH ANY SENSE OF PRESSURE, BUT ONLY WITH FEELINGS THAT STIR THE DEPTHS OF YOUR HEART. I WANT WRITING ABOUT IMMEDIACY AND ACTION. DON'T WRITE BECAUSE YOU FEEL YOU SHOULD OR YOU HAVE TO BUT BECAUSE YOU NEED TO. FIND THE WORDS THAT YOU CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT SCREAMING TO THE WORLD. THIS WON'T BE EASY, BUT NOTHING DANGEROUS EVER IS.

LITERALLY, WE WRITE HISTORIES. WE FOCUS ON THE PERSONAL, THE SPECIFIC, THE SMALL, THE BEAUTIFUL. WE WRITE NARRATIVES THAT DON'T PRETEND TO SPEAK FOR ANYONE ELSE. THERE IS A VALUE IN THIS AS THERE IS A VALUE IN ALL STORIES, IN ALL MYTHS. IT'S OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO CRASH AGAINST

A UNIFORM VIEW OF OUR PAST AND OUR LIVES, OF WHAT IS POSSIBLE AND WHAT THE LIMIT TO PERFORMING IS. BUT ANY POLICE LIKE THIS CAN EASILY BECOME A NEW NORM THAT SEEKS CONFORMITY, A NEW TREND TO IMITATE. DON'T SEEK AN AUDIENCE, SEEK ITS DESTRUCTION. DON'T EVER STOP INVENTING, EXPERIMENTING, TRYING. THE HOURS AND HOURS OF TIME WE PUT INTO THESE BEAUTIFUL LITTLE BOOKS ARE A HANDFUL OF OUR FRIENDS WILL SEE DO SERVE TO COUNTER THE LOGIC OF CAPITALISM, WHICH IS WHY IT IS GOOD TO STAY ILLATIONAL AND AMBITIOUS. OUR JOB IS TO DO AS MUCH DAMAGE TO THE SYSTEM OF ENTERTAINMENT AND ART AS WE CAN, AND BREAK APART ITS ENFORCEMENT OF BOREDNESS AND PASSIVITY, AND IN THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF SHARING THESE STORIES OF TRIUMPH AND TRAGEDY THERE IS AN AWESOME POWER. WE HOLD IN OUR HANDS TOOLS TO RECLAIM BITS AND PIECES OF OUR LIVES. AND FROM THIS POINT FORWARD I'LL SETTLE FOR NO UNDERESTIMATIONS OR HESITATIONS.

ZINES MUST BE FREE. FREE LIKE THE EXPERIENCE OF STEALING THOUSANDS OF PHOTOCOPIES AND BIKING 100 FIRST ACROSS TOWN AFTER MIDNIGHT. ZINES MUST MAKE ALL EFFORTS TO UPHOLD THE PRINCIPLE OF THE GIFT. SURE, THIS ISN'T ALWAYS POSSIBLE OR SUSTAINABLE, BUT IT MUST BE OUR IDEAL. LET'S SHED THIS SKIN OF RATIONALIZATION, OF PROFIT





MARGINS AND COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS. IT IS BETTER THAT STRANGERS AT BUS STOPS AND CROSSROADS RECEIVE PRESENTLY LIFE ALTERING GIFTS THAN WE LIVE STABLE LIVES FROM OUR LITTLE MAGAZINES. YOU CAN ALWAYS FIND A WAY TO SCAM FREE COPIES, ALWAYS. THAT CHALLENGE IS WHAT MAKES LIFE INTERESTING ENOUGH TO WRITE ABOUT, ANYWAYS.

AND LET'S BURN OUR CANNON WHILE WE'RE AT IT. THE FAMED 'ZINESTERS' WHO RECEIVE MUCH NOTORIETY. THE COMETRESSES AND BURIANS. SURE, IN OUR CULTURE THESE PEOPLE ARE WELL KNOWN NOT BECAUSE OF AN ARBITRARY TREND BUT DUE TO HARD WORK, TALENT, INSPIRING LIVES AND COMMITMENT (LET'S HOPE). BUT WE GET SETTLED AND SAFE WITH THESE NAMES AND ANTHOLOGIES AND UNIFORMITY. LOOK FOR THE WRITINGS OF OTHER LOST SOULS AND YOU'LL FIND THEM AROUND EVERY CORNER, ANKWARD AND INEXPERIENCED BUT BURNING WITH LIFE. OUR COMMUNITY SHOULD ENCOURAGE DIVERSITY AND DIFFERENCE, NOT NEW IDOLS TO ADORE OF NEW RULES TO COPY. REMEMBER THAT THE POINT TO ALL THIS IS AN ACCESSIBLE MEDIUM. CHANGE NAMES, INVENT PERSONAS, STEAL WORKS — WHATEVER IT TAKES. NO MORE CULTS OF PERSONALITIES, AND MORE EMPHASIS ON THE THINGS THAT SPEAK TO US SPECIFICALLY, THE SMALL AND UNKNOWN ZINES THAT FIT A CONTEXT.





OUR CULTURE IS GROWING AND DYING. IT HAS GROWING PAINS AND FIST FIGHTS WITH THE INTERNET, ZINE TOURS AND ZINE FAIRS. BOOKS AND MAGAZINES ABOUT ZINES. THIS IS META-CULTURE (SUBCULTURAL CREATIONS ABOUT AN ALREADY EXISTENT SUBCULTURE), AND IT SIGNIFIES SOPHISTICATION AS WELL AS STAGNATION. WHILE IT CAN BE AMAZING, IT CAN ALSO LET US LOSE SIGHT OF OUR PURPOSE, OF THE MEANING TO OUR MOVEMENT. IT CAN LET US ISOLATE OURSELVES AND FIND A PLACE WHERE THINGS ARE EASY, WHERE THINGS ARE SAFE. THERE IS SOMETHING TO BE SAID FOR THE TIME IT TAKES, ALL THE TYPEWRITERS AND PHOTOCOPIER JAMS, THE EXACTO CUTS AND DRIED OUT GLUE STICKS. IT'S A PROCESS THAT HUMBLIES ONE TO THE WRITTEN WORD. IT'S A WAY OF MAKING THINGS MATTER SO MUCH. SO I'M NOT GIVING UP ON THIS PROCESS, ON THIS MADNESS, BUT I'M DONE WITH ACQUIESCENCE TO A MOVEMENT THAT LACKS MOMENTUM, THAT SOMEHOW PARADOXICALLY LACKS MOTION. ONWARD, PUNKS AND NINJAS, DREAMERS AND POETS! AS WE KEEP OUR ZINES DANGEROUS WE KEEP OUR LIVES THE SAME WHY. AND IF WE CAN DO THAT, THERE REALLY IS NOTHING TO STOP US.

"IDEOLOGY IS THE REBEL'S TOMBSTONE."

"THE REAL DEMAND OF ALL INSUBJECTIVE MOVEMENTS IS THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE WORLD AND THE PERMEATION OF LIFE. THIS IS NOT A DEMAND FORMULATED BY THEORISTS. RATHER, IT IS THE BASIS FOR POETIC CREATION. REVOLUTION IS MADE EVERY DAY DESPITE, AND IN OPPOSITION TO, THE SPECIALISTS OF REVOLUTION. THIS REVOLUTION IS NAMELESS, LIKE EVERYTHING SPANNING FROM LIVED EXPERIENCE. ITS EXPLOSIVE COHERENCE IS BEING FORGED CONSTANTLY IN THE EVERYDAY CRANDDESTINITY OF ACTS AND DREAMS."

"... AND ANYONE WHO TRIES TO LIVE IS AN ARTIST."

-FRANK ZAPPA,  
THE REVOLUTION OF EVERYDAY LIFE

We pass the state line between Vermont and New Hampshire, and I get dropped in a bad spot. As I hitch with nowhere to pull over behind me, I imagine I'll be waiting for quite a while. I thought back over the recent months and the earth quake that shattered through the social geography. Eventually the conservative student federation negotiated a deal with the government, getting most of the money back into financial aid with a promise to restore the program in full next year. We all know how smart it is to trust the government. This was a bad move to make, given the immense power we held. Anyone who believes in the possibility of extra-parliamentary social movements to change society would be disappointed in the actions taken at that critical juncture. Like maybe we could actually have made some progress instead of just getting back what was stolen.

We must start fighting for things we believe in, not just fighting back. We are for freedom, for autonomy, for an education broken away from capitalism and hierarchy. I'm not too interested in our "right to education" but more how school is territory for resistance. I'm interested in the awakenings these events caused, as it was all riot cops and back room deals at the end there. A lot of people will define these struggles, these moments of rebellion in different ways. Reduce a movement of individual and collective desires to serve one agenda or another. But for me I know what I saw and felt, and with my thumb pointing down the road I'm searching for those feelings again. It is important to *live our lives*, and as a car screeches over from the far lane honking and coming to a halt, I'm certain of a few more ways that this is possible.

"AMERICA IS AN ANDROID, SURE, THERE IS A HEART. BUT MAYBE THIS POWER CAN SURVIVE A DEATH BLOW TO THE BRAIN OR CHEST. EACH OPPRESSIVE APPENDAGE FUNCTIONS AUTONOMOUSLY, BEATING US DOWN WITH ITS WHOLE BODY. EYES AND EARS AND ARMS AND HYDRA HEADS. YES, WE MUST KILL THIS BEAST. WE MUST CHOP OFF ITS HEAD AND STAB ITS ROBOTIC HEART. BUT ITS MANY PARTS WILL STILL MOVE, AND OUR PROJECT NEEDS TO FIGHT AN MANY FRONTS. SO, LET'S GET TOGETHER OUR WRANCHES BUT REALIZE THAT'S NOT ENOUGH. WE NEED NEW SCHEMATICS AND TOOLS TO DEMANTLE THE BLIPS AND BLEEPs."

The strike would continue to grow and its strength would increase, without much help from my own school. At the peak I heard estimates of 230,000 kids out, and a massive demo with 80,000 to 150,000 by some counts. It was definitely one of the largest protests I have ever seen.

Through this time a tight-knit group of us formed. Some old friends, some new ones, and an affinity for action, a common weariness of bureaucrats and tokenistic reformism. We had great political discussions at the diner down the street, arguing and laughing into too many late nights. It was grounded in action and tactics, in an urgent sense of 'what do we do now?' Our accomplishments weren't incredible, dropped banners, campouts in front of government offices, spontaneous marches around school, a marching band snaking through hallways and disrupting business as usual for a bit. But the sense of community and togetherness I felt was really powerful, finding people with similar dissatisfaction and a faith in taking direct action, however small it may have been. The lived experience of actually doing these things was amazing, and something I'll never forget. I have a temperate love affair with politics and activism, and I'm often left distraught and confused. These people, these conversations and this unbelievable time helped me see how everything I believe in can manifest itself in everyday life, with no adherence to 'the cause' or a future leftist fantasy that we need to sacrifice the present for. Definitive, formative and what was hopefully the start of more daring and unconventional things to come.





who were 17, 18 or maybe a bit older. We blocked the highway to Montreal's huge casino costing the government millions of dollars. We staged a giant sit-in at the stock exchange. We blocked freeways and ports and marched through shopping malls looting giant corporate grocery stores.

The day came for our assembly and we'd been up all night making banners, signs, flyers, plans. We gave out our measly five hundred flyers about why we should go on indefinite strike, too. We imagined a giant street party after the vote passed, all these angry kids spilling out into downtown and at least taking a little something back. I hurried to and from the copy shop putting my scamming skills to good use, and scrambled around school handing out flyers and talking to people, polemicizing and arguing up a storm. Just before the meeting started hundreds of francophone kids marched into the school yelling and banging on things to show their support, and a brief but beautiful chaos engulfed the foyer of the Hall building. The security guards were shitting themselves trying to maintain some semblance of law and order. I walked up to the balcony and waved my black flag, gleefully watching the madness below. People, drums, masks, chants, screams. A place I'd dragged myself through so many depressing days was completely transformed, a space opened, momentarily liberated. Inside the assembly got underway and the fakers that run our school showed their true colors. We voted for a one day strike and a bunch of angry men shouted until the meeting fell apart. It was my first taste of political defeat in this episode, and it disheartened a number of us.

"MAN WOULD BE ERASED, LIKE A FACE DRAWN IN THE SAND AT THE EDGE OF THE SEA."

-FOUCAULT



# RUNAWAY HOMES.

In the dead of winter I found myself in a new apartment. It felt good – a new beginning, a new start. A place for writing and making noise, for creation. My roommate Alden was starting afresh too, with that band he just quit. The week before I moved seemed so stressful, having decided to move but not deciding where to go. It seemed a new option would come up every day but nothing was exactly what I wanted. Too expensive, too far, people I didn't know... And then I ran into Alden at a potluck, went to check the place out and it just felt so right. After seeing the place we walked down Atwater talking and some woman was shouting about something on the street corner. As I got closer and listened to what she was saying, I was surprised to learn that she wanted to give away a book she had because she didn't read English. I looked to see what she had in her hand and it turned out to be *The Gay Science* by Nietzsche. I gladly accepted her offer and we stood there, stunned. It seemed to us like a sign of good things to come, and I took this random outburst of philosophy as sure proof I had made the right decision about this new place to hang my hat.

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One of the next nights I came home around midnight to find a wealth of furniture sitting on the street right next door. I guess a psychiatrist's office had moved out and left their couches, desks, tables and chairs for garbage – much to our delight. "Shit man,

More questions than answers floated around as 40 or so of us gathered the next night to talk about having an assembly and a strike vote. Disturbingly all those untrustworthy mini-politicos from the student union were all for it, at least on the surface. The rest of us were so disorganized at this point that we were ecstatic to see something actually going on at our school.

In the initial stages new information circulated daily. From the pioneering schools, more CEGEPS had strike votes. Certain faculties at the more radical French university voted to strike. Ten thousand students on strike, the newspapers proclaimed. And then it was twenty, thirty, forty thousand. From morning to evening the number would rise, and you'd hear people whispering new figures and new reports. "I heard engineers at Université de Montréal voted to strike! Engineers, that's fucking crazy!" I hear in the hallways. We plastered the walls with posters for our own vote, and the days counted down. Sixty-five thousand. Eighty thousand kids out. It was unreal. "Did you hear they occupied the minister of education's office, spray painted everywhere and broke things?" someone says to me on the way from one meeting to the next. Later that night someone else recounts the story of students who smashed in the door to a Liberal party meeting with a battering ram. There were too many protests and actions to remember. One CEGEP had built barricades and permanently occupied their school. I'd go there and see them building shields out of garbage can lids for the next day's economic disruptions or banging sticks on the concrete outside in weird furious drum jams. This huge gear stopping movement was being led by kids



I got back from New York to news reports of students at two CEGEPS<sup>1</sup> voting for indefinite strike. I was tremendously excited but still unsure about the significance of these events. The major concern was the 103 million dollars for student financial aid cut by the provincial government during the last budget. There were other concerns and many people became involved for varying reasons. It's possible our reductionist '103 million' rhetoric likely did more harm than good. The papers tried to downplay and bury the student movement at the beginning, writing these tiny articles that I would search out, desperate for more news of what was actually going on. Adding to an already chaotic week, me and some kids were planning the first get together of both our "anarchist reading circle" and a group that would become a makeshift campus action committee.

I don't really want to detail all of the specific political organizing that was going on, the make up of all the different groups and etc. The point of my story here is to express the momentum and power I felt as all this was going on, the incredible things that seemed to shake through society at large and a purpose that made people come together in really amazing ways.

I remember drinking coffee and talking to James about the strike one morning as I tried to finish up some Spanish homework. He was the first person I heard say, "Yeah, we need to vote and go on strike next week." This planted the seed. I remember thinking over this again and again all day. Could we go on strike? What did that even mean? What would it take?

<sup>1</sup>CEGEP is a college system in Quebec that includes the last year of high school.

we're going to be so organized!" Alden said upon discovering a giant whiteboard monthly planner. We were like kids in a candy store, shouting and moving all the stuff inside with a hurried sense of excitement, the snow and cold our only obstacle.

This began what would come to characterize our new home — garbage. Living down the street from Atwater market (a faux farmers market geared towards the yuppies up the hill in Westmount) provided us with all the produce we could use, and then some. All the merchants leave throwaways at the edge of their stalls, just waiting for us to carry off home. Another night soon after that Alden burst in the door with a giant grin on his face and a shopping cart completely full of food. He rolled it right into the kitchen and we gaped at the mountains and mountains of fruits and vegetables. Making jokes and plans about all the marvelous meals we could eat, we laughed late into the night with the idea of endless free food taking hold and sending us over the edge. I believe this was still when we didn't have a fridge, so we just left the food outside where it would surely stay frozen, thanks to the arctic Montreal winter. For a while after I first moved in we didn't have a stove, either, and we made all our food with a rice cooker and a plug in pan. It was strangely liberating to have such restrictions placed on our culinary abilities.

Then, months later, there was the night me and Pete found forty-seven litres of Tropicana juice in the PA dumpster. We wheeled it



through downtown on a little shopping cart, getting funny stares all along St. Catherine. We went down the hill and I decided to throw one container at our achievements. We laughed about throwing the red raspberry juice onto the freeway, fooling drivers into thinking they'd just hit a baby or something, but decided that was a little extreme. As we got home and sat and sipped some juice, I thought about how this sort of dumpster diving just completely fucks with your sense of exchange value, of scarcity over abundance. We gave out bags of juice to all our visitors and were completely safe from ever catching scurvy. It's unfortunate that juice can't provide one with all that's needed in a healthy balanced diet, even if Pete might have attempted to prove this wrong.

For me, there has always been something important to our cultural identity about garbage. About finding treasure in what our society has labeled useless, as unfit for human consumption. Sure, we're parasites – living off the excess of capitalism's destructive downward spiral. But the lived experience of dumpstering is really important. It means gaining a visceral, bodily experience with scavenging. It means holding in your hands the proof that Western civilization is totally fucking bonkers. Some call this method of food recuperation unsustainable. To me that argument doesn't hold much weight. We're given a context in which to live – the "broken children of Empire's belly," if you will – and are witness to massive amounts of food laying waste daily. Salvaging it is not about becoming comfortable and happy with the wasteful, consumerist nature of society at large. It's about learning the skills to

All year I'd been seeing the calls for a student strike, but being new to Quebec I didn't really grasp the potential of such a momentous event actually taking hold. Back where I'm from, the crooks in power had taken a similar path as the government here, gutting social programs in favor of tax cuts with the rhetoric of stimulating the economy. Same old depressing story, I thought, but arguing for more state control or funding did seem very "larger leashes, bigger chains" to me. At different demos I'd see these bands of anarchists calling for general strikes and the like, but being from BC, I assumed that these folks were disorganized enough to not really have any sway in the larger student movement. I believed student politics in Quebec to be controlled by careerist, complacent hacks like the wankers I'd met from our own student union and the slightly less shirty Canadian Federation of Students. Not that my judgments came from a place of self-righteousness, as being critical of bureaucracy while not taking any action yourself isn't really anything to be proud of. But it's important to make my distanced and uncertain position at the start of things clear. There are good strategic analogies to draw here, good lessons to learn. Up until days before things got going, I still didn't really believe something big could happen. The experiences of the next month would be incredibly inspiring and hectic, draining and unbelievable. And one thing I hold with me still is to never be satisfied with what you think is reality, with what you think possible. A few dreamers and maniacs might just flip the world around enough for all the naysayers to join in, and then who knows what could happen.

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And what makes this process important to our cultural identity, as I mentioned before, is rejecting our class socialization. It's rejecting the notion that we'll have to grow up and get a boring job and forget what it felt like to be young and rebellious. If we can form identities based on creative reactions to our cultural surroundings, based on the affirmations of things like freedom and joy and autonomy, these forms can fit other situations as well. So when there aren't any dumpsters the kids will grow their own food, break open trash compactors, make barcodes for fake coupons and shoplift with new ambition. And when there's no (or less) capitalism we'll all at least know how to share and make do with what we've got, how to use things as much as possible in many different ways. And we'll laugh when we think about how crazy it was that people wasted so much, but be thankful it gave us a taste of the anarchy to come.



As I settled in and got carried away with school and work, I had less time for garbage missions and late night talks with Alden. I still felt on the same level as him in a lot of ways, typing away or reading in my room and soaking up the melodies flowing from across the apartment. "Save me the ravages of your cash advances," he sings in a song about his old band as I type away little notes and ideas and ideas that may turn into zines or songs or manifestos for action. More likely just letters to far away friends.

town, farms all around me and a lot of dudes driving pickups giving me edgy looks. I walk down a little road to the interstate onramp, retracing the path of the bus I just bid farewell. At the gas station on the side of the highway I finish up my weak cup of coffee and make a sign saying "Boston." I stare out at the traffic flying up and down I-89 as I take the last bitter sips of black gold. It's one of those days. I can feel it. There's a nervousness and uncertainty that never goes away, but things feel good. Things feel new. As I walk to the onramp with my thumb out, someone sees my sign and stops before I even get there.



Later, as the Vermont forests and hills fly by, I'm reminded of some words Jackson said to me a long time ago. I had just returned from a long bout of traveling, and we were engaged in the first urgent and exciting talk we'd had in quite some time. "What's most important," he said, "is that we live our lives." It was a circular discussion revolving around activism, politics, what our friends had been up to and where we were headed, but these words made me pause for a few seconds and consider things. We're always so scared of spelling things out in simple and direct language. For some reason, his voice and sentiment echoes in my head. I think back on our conversation and how it seems to have stood the test of time. It seems to have been momentous and still relevant. Because this is how I feel, looking over the passing scen-



## THE STRIKE.

I got off the bus in St. Albans, Vermont and bought some coffee from the corner store. The Canadian Greyhound trips I take seem to be less eventful and worthy of narration than those through the US, and my ride from Montreal today is no exception. It was the cheapest ticket across the border on my way to Boston, giving me some status and legitimacy for those awful border officials. The only irregularity on the bus was the half hour wait at the border after all of us had been processed by customs.

"Looks like we're one short, and we'll be waiting a while," the nice driver said. I had seen them lead the missing man down the long hallway leading to the interrogation rooms. Waiting in line, my heart pounds and I sweat a little with anxiety. The officer asked a lot of questions and looked through my bag. I think I nearly swallowed my tongue when he flipped through my 2004 crew change guide and railroad maps. I frantically thought of a way to explain what those were. I don't imagine freight train riders are greeted with open arms by US border guards. Luckily, he didn't see the Hakim Bey book with both "terrorism" and "anarchy" on the cover, and abruptly sent me on my way. Back on the bus the driver announces we'll be on our way. The man taken in has not come back. No questions are asked.

So here I am in Vermont, drinking coffee in the morning sun on the first day of real travel since I moved to Montreal almost exactly one year ago. I'm unsure what to make of this tiny little

"The ruin of a nation begins in the homes of its people," I read on my travels, and I finally feel that our friendship and the environment we are creating with our new house could become resistance to that ruin. We've got something worthy of that word I struggle with a lot, as I think many of us do: home. Apartments can so easily slip into a place of routine, of shelter and escape. A hide out. A rut. I feel tipped in that direction sometimes, but more and more I am excited about just what may come from this little house we're making home. These cold rooms we're warming with all our experiences and conversations and imagination. And as we sit huddled under blankets fearful of heating bills, with our guitars or typewriters, drinking basil hot chocolate and talking about our lives, I'm happy I'm still able to make decisions based on random acts of goodwill from unknown philosophers on street corners in the dead of winter.

LES CUTE EN ROUGE

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